

Dear Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights,

I write to you today as a very concerned Canadian. In Bill C-6, you have before you legislation that has the potential to not help but harm the very children and people you propose to protect.

Firstly, I oppose conversion therapy. Almost all Canadians are against barbaric and degrading conversion therapy treatments, which include surgery and other practices. These should be banned. However, C-6 offers a very broad and problematic definition on what exactly is and constitutes conversion therapy.

This legislation defines conversion therapy as any “practice, treatment or service designed to change a person’s sexual orientation to heterosexual or gender identity to cisgender, or to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour.”<sup>1</sup>

Essentially this means that there are many different conversations, sermons, sessions or conferences, which talk about curbing any extra sexual behaviour (between two people of the opposite or same sex), which would be considered criminal. Parents, counsellors, friends and religious leaders all have the potential of being charged and becoming a criminal by sharing their traditional beliefs. In a Facebook video where Emmanuel shares his story, he talks about seeking support, encouragement and counselling, which might now become illegal. Additionally, this bill seeks to enshrine controversial gender identity and fluidity theories into law. C-7 also potentially jails those who want to help counsel others who want to accept and affirm their bodies.

Therefore, I believe that the Justice Committee needs to introduce clear amendments that will protect vulnerable Canadians, especially our children and families. These amendments would help offer clear boundaries and defend the vulnerable by seeking to:

- 1) Ban coercive, degrading practices that are designed to change a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity;
- 2) Ensure that no laws discriminate against Canadians by limiting what services they can receive based on their sexual orientation or gender identity;
- 3) Allow parents to speak with their own children about sexuality and gender, and set house rules about sex and relationships;
- 4) Allowing free and open conversations about sexuality and sexual behaviour; and
- 5) Not criminalize professional and religious counseling voluntarily requested and consented to by LGBTQ2 Canadians.

This bill needs amendments in addition to a fixed, narrow definition of conversion therapy. The other answer would be that C-6 needs to be re-written as a whole. If neither happens, to quote Barbara Kay, “The deeply flawed C-6 should be deep-sixed.”<sup>2</sup>

Sincerely,

Christine Aalbers

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<sup>1</sup> <https://parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/43-2/bill/C-6/first-reading>

<sup>2</sup> <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/barbara-kay-the-case-for-deep-sixing-bill-c-6>